

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 FEA-01 /039 W

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R 201045Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 767

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL DOUALA BY POUCH

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DEPT PASS USDOC FOR MEPD

E. O. N/A

TAGS: BENC, OEXC, CM, UK, FR, NI, AG

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: NATIONAL OIL REFINERY

REF: (A) STATE 989 (B) 76 STATE 310723 (C) YAOUNDE 101

AND PREVIOUS

1. JAN 19 DCM SAW LIBOCK, PRESIDENT, ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL, SONARA, AND DISCUSSED CONTENTS REFTEL A WITH RESPECT PAST EXPERIENCES AMERICAN ATTEMPTS BE HELPFUL REFINERY PROJECT. LIBOCK SAID HE DID NOT CARE DISCUSS PAST, BUT HIS JOB WAS TO PROTECT CAMEROON'S INTERESTS, JUST AS HE EXPECTED FRENCH COMPANIES PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS. HE CITED SEVERAL EXAMPLES INFIGHTING BETWEEN ELF AND TOTAL ON PROJECT, WHERE FOR COMMERCIAL REASONS ONE COMPANY REFUSED COOPERATE WITH OTHER IN FURNISHING NECESSARY INFORMATION FOR REFINERY FEASIBILITY STUDY. HE STATED PROJECT DIRECTOR FRENCH, BUT CAMEROONIAN PETROLEUM ENGINEER IS DEPUTY DIRECTOR. WHILE CONFIRMING TOTAL - C.F.P. WILL BE TECHNICAL PARTNERS THROUGH CONSTRUCTION PHASE OF

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PROJECT, LIBOCK INSISTED THAT WITH 68 PER CENT GURC PARTICIPATION AND EIGHT OF TWELVE SEATS ON BOARD HE, IN EFFECT, WILL BE MAKING THE DECISIONS -- AND THESE DECISIONS WILL BE BASED ON CAMEROON'S BEST INTERESTS AND NOT FRENCH OR FRENCH COMPANY'S INTERESTS.

2. DCM THEN BROUGHT UP MULTI-REGIONAL PROJECT ON INTERNATIONAL

ECONOMIC RELATIONS BEING HELD BEGINNING MARCH 13 (REFTEL B).
LIBOCK OBSERVED HE LEAVING END OF MONTH FOR VISIT ELF AND CFP
LABORATORIES, REFINERIES AND OTHER FACILITEIS. HOWEVER, HE WILL BE
FREE AFTER FIRST WEEK MARCH. HE ASKED FOR A DIPLOMATIC NOTE ON
SUBJECT AND SAID HE WILL TAKE UP WITH PRESIDENT PERSONALLY.
LIBOCK EDUCATED US BUT HAS NOT RETURNED IN ELEVEN YEARS. IN
MEANTIME, HE HAS RISEN TO POSITION AS ONE OF TWO SENIOR ECONOMIC
TECHNICAL ADVISORS TO PRESIDENT IN PRESIDENCY. WE HOPE LAND HIM
OR ENOW TANJONG (ANGLOPHONE FORMER GOVERNOR NORTH WEST
PROVINCE AND CURRENTLY OTHER SENIOR TECHNICAL ADVISOR IN CHARGE
FINANCE AND INTERNAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS) FOR THIS PROJECT.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: LIBOCK NOTED HE BEGINNING RECEIVE INQUIRIES
ON PROJECT AND LACK US COMPANY INTEREST. HE SAID ALL COMPANIES
REQUESTING INFO WOULD BE INFORMED ABOUT BIDS OF OFFER AND/OR
POSSIBILITIES PROJECT FINANCING. IN VIEW IMPORTANCE GURC
ATTACHES THIS PROJECT AND LIBOCK REASSURANCES ON ABILITY US
COMPANIES COMPETE, BELIEVE THAT IN SPITE TOTAL-CFP INVOLVEMENT,
PROJECT INFO SHOULD BE GIVEN WIDEST DISSEMINATION POSSIBLE AND
SEVERAL POTENTIAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, DESIGN ENGINEERING
AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED WRITE DIRECTLY.
(FYI: SPAW-GLASS, HOUSTON, TEXAS, ALREADY IN NEGOTIATIONS
DOUALA BUSINESSMAN ON HOTEL-APARTMENT COMPLEX.) IN MEANTIME,
EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND
ENCOURAGE LIBOCK TAKE ADVANTAGE OPPORTUNITY VISIT US.
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